



Downtown Center Business Improvement District

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES January 7, 2009

Board of Directors

Sonny Astani, Barbara Bundy, Kathy Faulk, John Goldrick, Jeffrey Griswold, Steve Hathaway, Carol E. Schatz, Patrick Spillane, Daniel B. Swartz, Cari Wolk, Peter Zen

Absent

Robert Cushman, David Damus, Frank Frallicciardi, Robert Hanasab, Kent Handleman, Marc Loge, Sandy Nam, Anne Peaks, Christopher Pfohl, Peklar Pilavjian, Steve Provencio, Colin Shepherd, Josh Wrobel

Staff

Hal Bastian, Michael Clark, Jacob Holloway, Connie Hwang, Aleeza Miller, Ken Nakano, Leticia Orozco, Alexander Stettinski, Justin Weiss

Guests

Sergeant Kathy McAnany

CALL TO ORDER

Hathaway called the meeting was called to order without a quorum at 8:06 a.m.

PROPERTY OWNER/PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD ON AGENDA ITEMS

Hathaway opened the meeting to the public for comments, in which there were none.

GUEST SPEAKER SERGEANT MCANANY'S COMMENTS:

Sergeant McAnany reported on the progress of the LAPD Pilot Project. In reviewing the crime statistics, the number of property crimes has significantly decreased in the area covered. Officers occasionally park the patrol car on Broadway, and then walk through the surrounding area on patrol.

McAnany acknowledges a problem on the Broadway side of the Grand Central Market, due to the availability of single servings of alcohol at that location. McAnany will speak with the Vice department to determine if a change can be made to prevent the sale of alcohol at that location.

The holiday season is typically a very busy period for the LAPD; however, the area covered in the LAPD Pilot Project has been relatively quiet during this year's holiday season, while the surrounding areas have been busy.

McAnany informed the Board that the LAPD officers stay updated about the events held at LA Live, because the type of entertainment held will draw different types of crowds. For example, a greater police presence is required during rap concerts. Officers also undergo regular training for potential scenarios such as active shooters.

McAnany suggested renewal of the service on a quarterly basis if the DCBID Board Members are satisfied with the level of service received. If the DCBID is dissatisfied and does not wish to renew, McAnany requests suggestions for improvement. Whatever the decision, McAnany assured the Board that standard service will not decrease.

RE-ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS

Schatz introduced the list of names of Board Members up for re-election at this time. A motion was made to re-elect the Board Members and was seconded.

ELECTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBER

Schatz introduced Cari Wolk as a new Board Member. Wolk is President of Athena Parking, Inc., a Los Angeles-based 100% woman-owned business. Her 31-year background in the parking industry includes local and national experience at airports, hotels, office buildings, surface lots, valet, sports and entertainment events. Her knowledge involves every aspect of parking, ranging from hands-on management to the complex functions of property acquisition, garage development and consulting. Prior to establishing Athena Parking in 1996, Ms. Wolk was a partner in her family business as well as one of the founding partners of Five Star Parking. She continues to provide consulting and WBE subcontracting services for many national firms. Ms. Wolk and Athena Parking proudly provide parking services for diverse and demanding entities such as LACMA, LAUSD, Gilmore Associates, Good Samaritan Hospital and Downtown Center Studios. Ms. Wolk is also a partner in KWD Investments, an investment firm which owns and operates both parking and non parking-related properties in three states. Ms. Wolk is an active member of CCA, the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, and the California and National Parking Associations. She is on the Executive Board of the Moriah Society and of the City of Hope Real Estate Council. She was born in Los Angeles, educated in Switzerland and attended USC.

Schatz recommended Wolk to the Board. The Board unanimously consented to Wolk's Board membership.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Schatz introduced the list of Board Members nominated for Officers and recommended voting for election of all. A motion was made for the election of Officers and seconded.

Mr. Hathaway recounted the successes of the DCBID in recent years and recognized the current and previous Board Members and staff for their efforts in achieving those successes. Ms. Schatz thanked Mr. Hathaway for his service to the DCBID as President and welcomed Barbara Bundy in her new role as President.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Schatz wished the Board Members a happy new year on behalf of the staff and assured the Board Members that the staff is mindful of the economic uncertainty and is doing all it can to minimize expenses. Schatz expressed the desire of the DCBID to continue the momentum of growth in Downtown and create a positive image during this economic downturn and stressed the importance of emphasizing the positive results of the efforts of the DCBID.

Schatz reported:

In the context of being frugal during this time, the DCBID is in the process of evaluating the programs of the DCBID, such as the Ambassador program and the Safety program. The results will be presented to Ms. Schatz, who will in turn present it to the Board for a decision whether or not to continue these programs.

Schatz introduced Aleeza Miller as the replacement for Bobby Ortiz.

Steve Hathaway has completed his term as Chairperson. Ms. Schatz thanked Mr. Hathaway for his long-standing commitment to the BID and for his leadership as Chair. The board will vote for a new Chair in January 2009.

Ms. Schatz thanked the Board for their continued support and recognized the DCBID staff for their hard work.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Because a quorum had still not been reached, a motion was not made for approval of the minutes.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Bastian reported:

The First Annual Halloween Party for Downtown LA Kids, put on in conjunction with FIDM and the Downtown Ralphs Fresh Fare at Grand Hope Park, was highly successful, with over 250 children and 350 adults in attendance.

The Downtown Los Angeles Demographic Survey was a great success, with over 10,000 surveys completed and over 6,500 new email addresses were collected, approximately 85% of participants.

Over 250 people attended the 6th Annual Fall Downtown Los Angeles Program & Tour, held at the AT&T Center auditorium. Participants included office, retail and residential brokers, commercial and investment bankers, restaurateurs and retailers, and developers and investors.

The Hail-a-Taxi campaign was kicked off on December 8th. The signs promoting the campaign were initially to be removed at the end of December, but have been allowed to remain through the month of January. The campaign is showing some promise but taxi drivers still need some encouragement to change their habit of waiting in taxi lines to pick up a fare. With this in mind, the change in culture was not expected to occur overnight.

Through the help of the private sector, the Red Line subway hours were extended on Friday and Saturday nights during the holiday season to operate until 3:00am. The largest ridership was recorded on New Year's Eve.

Plans are in the works for another weekend promoting Downtown, which will be smaller than last year's Downtown Open House. There will be less emphasis on the real estate component, although real estate will still remain a part of the program, but the focus will be on restaurants, bars and retail.

In the upcoming year, focus will be on bringing in office tenants from outside the immediate area.

FINANCE

The Finance Committee was unable to meet and discuss the November 2008 financial statements due to conflicting holiday schedules. The committee will meet in January to review the November 2008, December 2008, and January 2009 financials, which will be presented at the Board meeting on March 4, 2009.

Summarily, the DCBID is on track with the forecasted budget and the budget for 2009 has been completed.

MARKETING

Stettinski reported:

The DCBID is collaborating with LA Inc. on the dineLA promotion, which will run for two weeks, from the end of January. Discounted menus will be presented by participating restaurants. The DCBID is co-sponsoring a restaurant and nightlife guide with LA Inc., to be passed out at conventions and by the Ambassador program.

Marketing's monthly newsletter goes out to over 13,000 people, which promotes businesses and restaurants in Downtown.

Feedback was difficult to obtain for The Holiday Stay & Play campaign. The campaign was relatively successful, but wasn't as impactful as the Summer Stay & Play.

Marketing is currently working on a new media campaign: "Top 10 Things To Do In Downtown For Valentine's Day." The focus is on daytime activities, but specials will be offered for those who want to stay overnight. Restaurants and retailers are being asked to offer specials as incentives to bring people Downtown.

"Downtown LA Nights" has been launched with the Young Nightlife campaign to promote restaurants and nightclubs in Downtown. Marketing is currently revamping to do another media campaign. Downtown LA Nights has attracted almost 2,000 unique viewers in under a month.

The new website is currently in being built. The content has been completed, and should be launched in February 27, 2009. Another media campaign is being planned to promote the new website and the e-newsletter.

The Guide to Downtown LA was given to all merchants in the area and will also be distributed by the Ambassadors. Business cards will be printed for Ambassadors' distribution as well, with contact information for recipients to follow up with, including the website address. Almost 40,000 guides have been distributed to date.

The Ambassadors continue their training to be as helpful and visible as possible.

OPERATIONS

Nakano reported:

Giant Village on New Year's Eve was the big event of the month. The biggest complaint received was regarding concerns with noise. The event was downscaled with this concern in mind from 15,000 anticipated attendees to 8,000 anticipated attendees, but only approximately 5,000 attendees were present. No major incidences were reported on New Year's Eve aside from the shooting on Main Street, but no injuries occurred.

A statistical comparison of the activity of the LAPD Pilot Program from 2007 to 2008 has been distributed. Among the concerns is the increase in misdemeanor incidents, but the trend moved to a decrease the last two months of 2008.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business.

NEW BUSINESS

The first housing tour of the year, given by Justin Weiss and Hall Bastian, is this Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

The DCBID bylaws will be checked for giving the DCBID Officers the authority to decide on action items that have not been resolved at Board Meetings due to a lack of a quorum. Board meeting attendance records will also be reviewed.

During CCA's fundraiser in December for Wendy Greuel, she mentioned the possibility of putting together a 2-day convention of anyone in the process of trying get plans approved. She would like to bring in the Building Safety, Fire, and Planning departments to work with applicants on getting plans approved. The Board members would like to see development reform, especially considering the economic downturn.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:37 a.m.